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HENRY WARD BEECHER

GUTZON BORGLOM

PLYMOUTH CHURCH, BROOKLYN, N. Y.

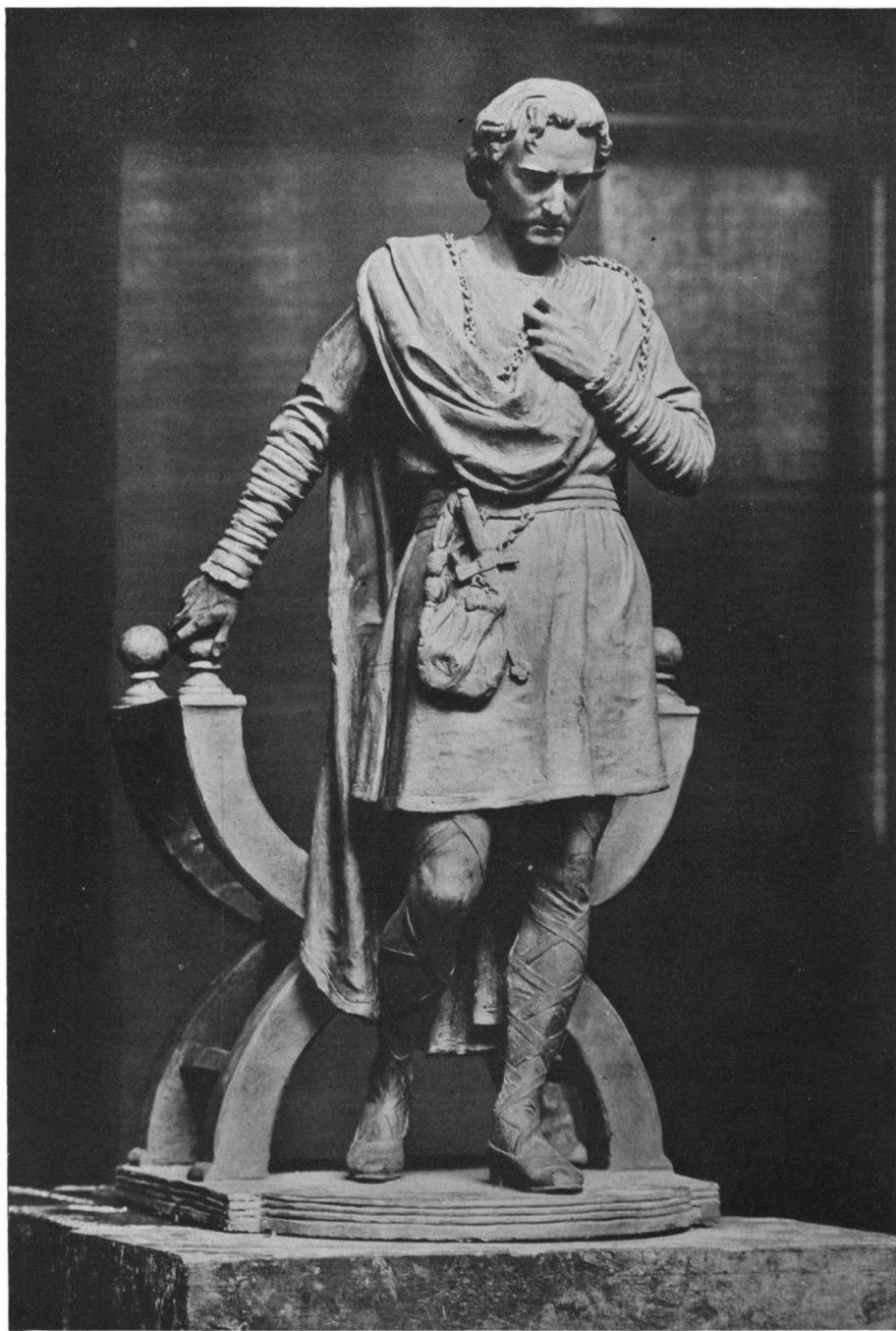
STATUES OF BOOTH AND BEECHER

BY EDWARD HALE BRUSH

TWO men who belonged to the same generation and who were perhaps equally eminent in their respective professions were Edwin Booth and Henry Ward Beecher. Whether Beecher or Booth should come first depends on the individual point of view. The great services of each have been called to mind this autumn by two portrayals in sculpture of their physical characteristics by two of the younger generation of sculptors, men who are not too young, however, to have seen and known these great men of the immediate past in the flesh.

The sculptor of the figure of Booth is Edmond T. Quinn, and of the Beecher statue, Gutzon Borglum, both of New York. The characteristics of the two men that have been delineated by them present a marked contrast. The circumstances in which the works of art came into being have an interest aside from the fact that they are welcome additions to already existing reminders of the brave and eloquent preacher and great actor.

Admirers of Edwin Booth and those optimistic souls who see signs of a re-



EDWIN BOOTH

TO BE ERECTED IN

EDMOND T. QUINN

GRAMERCY PARK, NEW YORK

THE GIFT OF THE PLAYERS' CLUB

vival of the popularity of Shakespearean drama will be interested and encouraged by the erection, as the gift of the Players' Club, of this fine sculptural portrait of the greatest tragedian of his age. It will stand in Gramercy Park, New York, opposite the Players' Club and also opposite the National Arts Club, in a region associated with the histrionic triumphs of the past and with men of letters, statesmen, and artists whose names are household words.

Booth is represented in the part of Hamlet, doubtless his best known rôle, and the design submitted by Mr. Quinn was selected as the result of a competition in which were entered nine sculptors, including, besides the winner, Messrs. Robert Aitken, J. Massey Rhind, Frances F. M. Tonetti, John Flanagan, James Earle Fraser, and Paul Conkling. The model submitted by J. Massey Rhind won especial praise. All were exhibited in the galleries of the Arts Club. MacMonnies was to have modeled this statue, but the design he submitted did not please the committee, so they instituted a competition limited to sculptor members of the club. Had it been open to outsiders doubtless the list of competitors would have been much longer.

The pose in which Booth is represented by Mr. Quinn in the character of Hamlet is believed to have been a favorite one with the actor. Booth was the ideal Hamlet. In this figure he is standing, head slightly bowed, as if absorbed in deep contemplation. As the designs were submitted incognito the honor won by Mr. Quinn when his model was selected was without qualification. Perhaps it will not diminish the craze for vaudeville and photo plays that the admirers of Booth and of Shakespeare have faith enough in the ultimate triumph of higher ideals to erect this memorial of a man who upheld the loftiest standards in dramatic art; but it is a refreshing reminder of great artistic achievements.

There is a significance in the new statue of Beecher aside from that of its merit as a work of art, or its interpretation of the great preacher from a different angle than that in which the late

John Quincy Adams Ward saw him, when he modeled the statue which for many years has stood in front of the Brooklyn Borough Hall. The erection of this monument to Mr. Beecher on Orange street, at one side of Plymouth Church, is another proof given us that the church which Mr. Beecher made famous, and which is now worthy to rank among the great historic churches of America, will remain where it is in the midst of a population which especially needs the ministrations of what is called the institutional church, instead of removing, as so many organizations of the kind do, to a more fashionable district when the tide of well-to-do attendants and supporters drifts away from the old center. This surely is as the fearless champion of human rights and democracy in all things would have wished it. For not only will his statue stand close to the building so identified with his career, but another monument, to his services will be there, the Arbuckle Memorial, built to enable the ministrations of Plymouth Church to be carried on in a way responsive to the needs of to-day.

Connecting the Memorial with old Plymouth Church itself is the Beecher Arcade, and the statue by Borglum stands in the center of the arcade facing toward Orange street and looking across a small but beautiful enclosure called Beecher Memorial Park. It is not too far from the street to prevent the casual passer-by from obtaining a striking impression from the statue. This is of bronze, ten feet high from the pedestal, and was dedicated with interesting ceremonies on October 19th, two great-granddaughters of Mr. Beecher unveiling the monument. At one side of the main figure two negro slave girls are portrayed, the group as a whole being a reminder of the scene when Mr. Beecher, to arouse national sentiment against slavery, sold two sisters with dark skin at auction in Plymouth Church in 1860. This was when Mr. Beecher was about fifty years old and the statue thus shows him at the height of a splendid maturity, possessing both the vigor of youth and the dignity of middle age. Many count this among Mr. Borglum's most successful works.